

Taste of Home

Holiday

50+

Spooktacular Eats
**TO CELEBRATE
THE SEASON**



Happy
Halloween!

Taste of Home

Things That Go Yum in the Night!

Bring your bag of spooks and scares this Halloween and whip up a frightful feast for all to share. *Taste of Home Holidays: Happy Halloween!* is the answer for hauntingly delicious recipes that will put a spell on adults and kids alike.

Keep your guests on the edge of their seats from appetizers to dessert with this collection of fall favorites infused with a ghostly twist. Between bobbing for apples and telling ghost stories, gather the group for a supper of enchanting entrees and spooky sides. With six chapters of Halloween-inspired recipes, your house will be the place for all things creepy, crawly and delicious.

Or perhaps you're looking for a sweet alternative to candy for this year's trick-or-treaters? This book has a variety of ghastly-good cookies, bars and desserts guaranteed to bring little mummies and witches knocking on your door for more.

With every recipe tested and approved by the *Taste of Home* Test Kitchen and home cooks across the country, you have every reason to fill this haunted holiday with tasty tricks and treats. The jack-o'-lanterns are lit and the ghouls are stirring...it's time for a Halloween feast!





A TASTE OF HOME/READER'S DIGEST BOOK

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Contents

Creepy Snacks & Sips

Scary Good Soups & Breads

Enchanting Main Dishes

Spooky Side Dishes & Salads

Boo-tiful Bars, Cookies & Candies

Haunting Desserts

Creepy Snacks & Sips



Witches' Brew

Stir up some Halloween beverages that are as bewitching as the rest of your menu. Just leave out the vodka for a nonalcoholic version—then the kids can have some, too!

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 20 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 cup water**
- 8 medium kiwifruit, peeled and quartered**
- ½ cup fresh mint leaves**
- Green food coloring, optional**
- 1 cup vodka, optional**
- 1 liter ginger ale, chilled**
- Ice cubes**

1. In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water to a boil. Cook and stir until sugar is dissolved; set aside to cool.

2. Place the kiwi, mint and sugar syrup in a blender; cover and process until blended. Tint green if desired. Pour into a large pitcher; stir in vodka if desired. Refrigerate until chilled.

3. Just before serving, stir in ginger ale. Serve over ice.

NOTE To make each broom, cut 1 green shoestring licorice into 1-in. lengths. Arrange around end of 1 pretzel rod to form broom bristles; tightly wrap bristles with 1 piece black shoestring licorice, tucking in ends to secure.



Dirt Balls

Looking for a showstopper on a Halloween buffet? Check out these dill-garlic cheese balls! They're so simple to make, and you can omit the black sesame seeds for other holidays.

—KELLY YEAGER HAHNVILLE, LA

PREP: 20 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 3 CHEESE BALLS (¾ CUP EACH)

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
- 3 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) crumbled feta cheese**
- 5 green onions, chopped**
- 3 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1 tablespoon dill weed**
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano**
- ¾ teaspoon coarsely ground pepper**
- Black sesame seeds**
- Bagel chips**

- 1.** In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and oil until smooth. Stir in the feta cheese, onions, garlic, dill, oregano and pepper. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
- 2.** Shape cheese mixture into three balls and roll in sesame seeds. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Serve with bagel chips.



Pumpkin Pie Shots

Grown-up treats that feature pumpkin and butterscotch schnapps will entice guests back for more. The gelatin shots are made ahead, making them a great party starter.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 25 MIN. + CHILLING

MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin**
- 1 cup cold water**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned pumpkin**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pumpkin pie spice**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butterscotch schnapps liqueur**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vodka**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons heavy whipping cream**
- Sweetened whipped cream**

1. In a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over cold water; let stand 1 minute. Heat and stir over low heat until gelatin is dissolved. Stir in pumpkin, sugar and pie spice; cook and stir until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat. Stir in liqueur, vodka and cream.

2. Pour into twelve 2-oz. shot glasses; refrigerate until set. Top with sweetened whipped cream.



Hot Dog Mummies with Honey Mustard Dip

These flaky mummy sandwiches are instant yummy hits! The accompanying mustard dip adds just the right kick.

—JESSIE SARRAZIN LIVINGSTON, MT

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN.
MAKES: 20 APPETIZERS (ABOUT 1 CUP DIP)

- 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**
- 20 miniature hot dogs**
- 1 large egg**
- 2 teaspoons water**
- Dijon mustard**

DIP

- ½ cup mayonnaise**
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard**
- 3 tablespoons honey**
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar**
- Dash hot pepper sauce**

- 1.** Separate crescent roll dough into two rectangles; seal seams and perforations. Cut each rectangle horizontally into 10 strips. Wrap one strip around each miniature hot dog.
- 2.** Place 1 in. apart on an ungreased baking sheet. In a small bowl, whisk egg and water; brush over tops. Bake at 375° for 10-15 minutes or until golden brown. Add eyes with mustard. In a small bowl, combine the dip ingredients; serve with mummies.

Shriveled Brains

Family and friends will be shocked to learn these tasty brains are actually pot stickers!

—JACQUELYNNE STINE LAS VEGAS, NV

PREP: 50 MIN. • **COOK:** 10 MIN.
MAKES: 4 DOZEN

- 1 pound boneless skinless chicken thighs, cut into chunks
- 1½ cups sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 small onion, cut into wedges
- 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
- 2 tablespoons prepared mustard
- 2 tablespoons Sriracha Asian hot chili sauce or 1 tablespoon hot pepper sauce
- 1 package (10 ounces) pot sticker or gyoza wrappers
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten

SAUCE

- 1 cup reduced-sodium soy sauce
- 1 green onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger

1. In a food processor, combine the uncooked chicken, mushrooms, onion, hoisin sauce, mustard and chili sauce; cover and process until blended.
2. Place 1 tablespoon of the chicken mixture in the center of each wrapper. (Until ready to use, keep wrappers covered with a damp towel to prevent them from drying out.) Moisten the edges with egg. Bring opposite sides together to form a semicircle; pinch to seal.
3. Place pot stickers in a single layer on a large greased steamer basket rack; place in a Dutch oven over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 8-10 minutes or until filling juices run clear.
4. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine sauce ingredients. Serve with pot stickers. Refrigerate leftovers.



Nutty Stuffed Toadstools

These haunting appetizers are perfect for a spooky gathering... or any occasion, really!

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.
MAKES: 18-20 SERVINGS

18 to 20 large fresh mushrooms

1 small onion, chopped

3 tablespoons butter

¼ cup dry bread crumbs

¼ cup chopped pecans

3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

¼ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon dried basil

1 dash cayenne pepper

- 1.** Remove stems from mushrooms; set caps aside. Finely chop stems. In a large skillet, saute chopped mushrooms and onion in butter for 5 minutes or until liquid has evaporated. Remove from the heat; set aside.
- 2.** In a small bowl, combine the bread crumbs, pecans, Parmesan cheese, salt, basil and cayenne; add mushroom mixture. Stuff firmly into mushroom caps.
- 3.** Place in a greased 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 15-18 minutes or until tender. Serve warm.

Swamp Juice a la Slime

The green goo oozing down the sides of the eerie wineglasses makes this fruity beverage ideal for a Halloween party.

—MELISSA ANN BEIER HOWELL, MI

PREP: 25 MIN. + FREEZING
MAKES: 10 SERVINGS (2 QUARTS)

- ½ cup light corn syrup**
Green paste food coloring
- 5 cups unsweetened pineapple juice**
- 2 cups white grape juice**
- 2 drops yellow food coloring, optional**
- 1 cup club soda, chilled**
Fresh pineapple slices, optional

- 1.** Refrigerate 10 champagne flutes or cocktail glasses until chilled. In a small bowl, combine corn syrup and green food coloring; dip rims of chilled glasses into mixture. Turn glasses upright, allowing mixture to slightly run down sides of glasses. Freeze until firm.
- 2.** In a pitcher, combine the pineapple juice, grape juice and yellow food coloring if desired. Refrigerate until chilled.
- 3.** Just before serving, stir club soda into juice mixture. Pour juice into prepared glasses; garnish with pineapple if desired.



Bone Slices

A savory seafood filling is featured inside these creepy bone pieces.

For even more fun, stack the slices vertically on a platter to resemble a backbone.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 25 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: ABOUT 6 DOZEN

- ½ cup mayonnaise**
- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 2 tablespoons each finely chopped celery, green pepper and onion**
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- 1 teaspoon ground mustard**
- 1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
- ⅛ teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning**
- ⅛ to ¼ teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- 1½ cups cooked or canned crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed**
- 4 flour tortillas (10 inches)**

- 1.** In a large bowl, beat mayonnaise and cream cheese until smooth. Add the celery, green pepper, onion, lemon juice, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, lemon-pepper and hot pepper sauce. Stir in crab.
- 2.** Spread about ½ cup filling over each tortilla. Roll up tightly; wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until chilled. Cut into ½-in. slices.

Popcorn Owls

Sweet and chewy popcorn balls are transformed when they're made into wide-eyed owls. They take a little bit of assembly, but definitely draw a lot of compliments.

—EMMA MAGIELDA AMSTERDAM, NY

PREP: 25 MIN. • **COOK:** 10 MIN.
MAKES: 5 OWLS

- 5 quarts air-popped popcorn
- 2 cups sugar
- 1½ cups water
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar
- 1 to 2 tablespoons marshmallow creme
- Candy corn, orange candy slices, milk chocolate M&M's and salted cashews

1. Place popcorn in a large ovenproof bowl; keep warm in oven at 200°. In a heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, water, corn syrup and salt. Cook over medium heat until a candy thermometer reads 250° (hard-ball stage). Remove from the heat; stir in butter and vinegar until the butter is melted. Immediately pour over popcorn; toss to coat.

2. When mixture is cool enough to handle, quickly shape into five 3¼-in. balls and five 4-in. balls, dipping hands in cold water to prevent sticking. Flatten bottom of the popcorn balls slightly to allow them to sit flat. Place a small ball on top of a large ball, forming the owl's head and body.

3. Immediately decorate owl, using marshmallow creme to attach candies. Add candy corn for claws. Press the orange slices into sides for wings. Flatten and cut additional orange slices into semicircles for ears and ¾-in circular eyes. Press M&M's into orange circles to complete the eyes. Add a cashew for each beak.



NOTE This recipe was prepared with popcorn popped in oil. We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the

thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on the results of your test.

Scary Good Soups & Breads



Spider Bread

Set out this unique spider instead of biscuits or rolls, and you'll definitely make an impression. Start with from-scratch dough and shape it as directed.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 30 MIN. + RISING
BAKE: 35 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 1 LOAF

2½ to 2¾ cups all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon sugar

1 package (¼ ounce) quick-rise yeast

1 teaspoon salt

½ cup water

½ cup milk

1 tablespoon butter

2 large eggs, divided use

2 raisins

1. In a large bowl, combine 2 cups flour, sugar, yeast and salt. In a small saucepan, heat the water, milk and butter to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat just until moistened. Add 1 egg; beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.

2. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes. Shape half of the dough into a ball and place in the center of a greased baking sheet. Divide the remaining dough in half. Roll one half into a ball and place at the top for head.

3. Divide remaining dough into eight portions. Roll each into a 5-in. rope. Attach ropes to body, forming legs. If desired, place a ball of foil under each leg to prop. Press all edges together to seal. Add raisins for eyes. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 25 minutes.

4. Beat the remaining egg; brush over dough. With a sharp knife, make a shallow cut on face for smile. Bake at 350° for

35-40 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to a wire rack to cool.



Sweet Potato Biscuits

A pumpkin cookie cutter can be used for savory treats as well as sweet ones. These biscuits are a delightful addition to any fall meal.

—FLO BURTNETT GAGE, OK

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN.
MAKES: 1 DOZEN

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ⅔ cup cold butter, cubed**
- 1 cup cold mashed sweet potatoes
(prepared without milk or butter)**
- ⅔ cup milk**
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten**
- ½ teaspoon sugar**

- 1.** In a large bowl, combine the first five ingredients. Cut in butter until crumbly. Combine sweet potato and milk; stir into crumb mixture just until moistened. Turn onto a floured surface; knead 10-15 times. Roll out to ½-in. thickness; cut with a floured 2½-in. pumpkin-shaped cookie cutter or biscuit cutter.
- 2.** Place 2 in. apart on a greased baking sheet. Brush with egg; sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 425° for 10-12 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Halloween Acorn Squash Soup

Add this warming soup to your next “boo-fest” and your guests will make it disappear!

—DORRENE BUTTERFIELD CHADRON, NE

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.
MAKES: 7 SERVINGS

- 7 slices pumpernickel bread**
- 4 tablespoons butter, divided**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- Dash salt**
- ½ cup chopped onion**
- ¼ cup chopped celery**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules**
- ¼ teaspoon dill weed**
- ¼ teaspoon curry powder**
- Dash cayenne pepper**
- 2 cups chicken broth**
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk**
- 3 cups mashed cooked acorn squash**
- Additional cayenne pepper, optional**

1. Cut pumpernickel bread with bat- or cat-shaped 3½-in. cookie cutters; discard scraps. Melt 2 tablespoons butter. In a small bowl, combine the butter, oil and salt; brush over both sides of cutouts. Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 300° for 10-15 minutes or until crisp and toasted. Remove to a wire rack to cool.

2. In a large saucepan, saute onion and celery in remaining butter until tender. Stir in the flour, bouillon, dill, curry and cayenne until blended. Gradually add broth and milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in squash; heat through. Cool slightly.



3. In a blender, process soup in batches until smooth. Return to the pan; heat through. Garnish servings with bat or cat

cutouts; sprinkle with additional cayenne if desired.

Bewitched Chili

One pot and 30 minutes—yes, please! Kids and grown-ups love this warm-you-up chili for Halloween.

—JANICE WESTMORELAND BROOKSVILLE, FL

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.

MAKES: 12 SERVINGS (3 QUARTS)

- 1 pound bulk pork sausage**
- 1 large onion, chopped**
- 2 cans (16 ounces each) chili beans, undrained**
- 1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes**
- 3 cups water**
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies**
- 1 envelope chili seasoning mix**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 12 round blue tortilla chips, halved**
- 12 triangular blue tortilla chips**

1. In a Dutch oven, cook sausage and onion over medium heat 5-7 minutes or until sausage is no longer pink, breaking up sausage into crumbles; drain. Add beans, tomatoes, water, chilies, seasoning mix and sugar; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, covered, 20 minutes to allow flavors to blend, stirring frequently.

2. Top each serving with two halved round tortilla chips and one triangular tortilla chip inserted vertically into the chili between the round halves to resemble a witch's hat.

FREEZE OPTION *Freeze cooled chili in freezer containers. To use, partially thaw in refrigerator overnight. Heat through in a saucepan, stirring occasionally and adding a little water if necessary. Top with tortilla chips just before serving.*

Caramel Apple Doughnut Muffins

Welcome Halloween and autumn into your kitchen with these muffins.

The recipe will remind you of cinnamon-sugar cake doughnuts.

—JULIE RUBLE CHARLOTTE, NC

PREP: 50 MIN. • **BAKE:** 15 MIN.
MAKES: 4 DOZEN (SCANT 1 CUP SAUCE)

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- ¾ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 large egg
- ¾ cup 2% milk
- ¾ cup canola oil
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 medium apple, peeled and finely chopped (about 1 cup)

CARAMEL SAUCE

- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 tablespoons water
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream, warmed
- 2 tablespoons creme fraiche or sour cream
- ¾ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¾ teaspoon salt

COATING

- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, whisk flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and nutmeg. In another bowl, whisk egg, milk, oil and vanilla until blended. Add to the flour mixture; stir just until moistened. Fold in apple.



2. Fill greased mini-muffin cups three-fourths full. Bake 15-17 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

3. Meanwhile, for caramel sauce, in a small heavy saucepan, combine sugar and water; stir gently to moisten all the sugar. Cook over medium heat, gently swirling pan occasionally, until syrup turns a medium amber color, about 8-10 minutes.

4. Remove from heat; gradually stir in warm cream. Transfer to a small bowl; place bowl in an ice-water bath, stirring frequently until cooled, about 5 minutes. Remove bowl from ice water. Whisk in creme fraiche, vanilla and salt.

5. For coating, combine sugar and cinnamon. Dip tops of warm muffins in butter, then coat in cinnamon-sugar. Serve muffins with caramel sauce.

Bat Wing Soup

Convenient stewed tomatoes are the base for this spooky soup that gets extra richness from cream added minutes before serving. It's nicely flavored with garlic (to keep those vampires away!) and garnished with toasty bat wings.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 25 MIN.
MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

- 4 garlic cloves, peeled**
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 4 cans (14½ ounces each) stewed tomatoes**
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream**
- 6 slices bread, crusts removed**
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened**
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning**

- 1.** In a saucepan, saute garlic in oil until tender. In a blender or food processor, process garlic and tomatoes in batches until smooth. Return all to the pan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Add cream and heat through.
- 2.** To make bat wings, remove crusts from bread. Flatten with a rolling pin. Using a kitchen shears, cut each slice in half diagonally, cutting wavy lines to resemble bat wings.
- 3.** Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Spread with the butter; sprinkle with Italian seasoning. Bake at 400° for 5-8 minutes or until golden brown, turning once. Add two wings to each bowl of soup. Serve immediately.

Witch's Broomstick Bread

No one can resist the aroma or flavor of homemade bread. It's even more enjoyable when the dough is fashioned into a witch's broomstick.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 40 MIN. + RISING • **BAKE:** 30 MIN.
MAKES: 16 SERVINGS

- 2 teaspoons active dry yeast
- 1½ cups warm water (110° to 115°)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 4 to 4½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted, divided
- ½ cup shredded Italian cheese blend
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese, divided
- ½ teaspoon poppy seeds
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
- ¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 jar (24 ounces) meatless spaghetti sauce, optional

1. In a large bowl, dissolve the yeast in warm water. Add the olive oil, sugar, salt and 2½ cups flour. Beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (dough will be sticky).

2. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

3. Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Remove a third of the dough; cover and set aside. Roll remaining dough into a 10-in. circle. Transfer to a parchment paper-lined baking sheet.



4. Brush 1 tablespoon butter over bottom half of circle to within ¼ in. of edges. Sprinkle with Italian cheese blend, ¼ cup Parmesan cheese, poppy seeds, garlic powder, oregano and pepper flakes. Fold dough over filling. Using scissors or a pizza cutter, cut dough into ½-in.-wide strips to within ½ in. of fold; twist and curl strips into a brush.

5. Shape the remaining dough into a 12-in. rope. Twist dough and place above brush for a handle. Brush remaining butter over dough. Sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese.

6. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with spaghetti sauce if desired.

Pretty Autumn Soup

Carrots, squash and sweet potato combine to make a healthy and colorful soup, which I especially enjoy when the weather gets cool.

—MARGARET ALLEN ABINGDON, VA

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 20 MIN.

MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

- 2½ cups cubed peeled butternut squash**
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cubed**
- 3 medium carrots, sliced**
- ¼ cup thawed orange juice concentrate**
- 3 cups fat-free milk**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 3 tablespoons reduced-fat sour cream**
- 2 tablespoons minced chives**
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted**

- 1.** Place the squash, sweet potato and carrots in a steamer basket; place in a large saucepan over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 12-16 minutes or until tender. Cool slightly. Transfer to a food processor; add juice concentrate. Cover and process until smooth.
- 2.** Transfer to a large saucepan; stir in the milk, salt and pepper. Cook and stir over low heat until heated through (do not boil). Top each serving with 1½ teaspoons sour cream, 1 teaspoon chives and ½ teaspoon sesame seeds.

Bats, Twigs and Things Chili

You'll want to serve up hearty portions of this chili before you set the kids loose to trick-or-treat. The edible bats are made from tortillas and take less than 10 minutes to bake. Make extra because they will "fly off" fast!

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 35 MIN. • **COOK:** 30 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 pound ground beef
- $\frac{1}{4}$ pound uncooked chorizo or spicy bulk pork sausage
- 4 cups thinly sliced green cabbage
- 1 banana pepper, cut into $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch rings
- 1 small sweet red pepper, chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 4 cups spicy hot V8 juice
- 1 jar (16 ounces) mild chunky salsa
- 1 can (15 ounces) pinto beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (15 ounces) garbanzo beans or chickpeas, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14½ ounces) diced tomatoes and green chilies
- 1 can (10½ ounces) condensed beef consomme, undiluted
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup minced fresh cilantro, divided
- 3 teaspoons chili powder
- 1½ teaspoons ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon sugar

GARNISHES

- 2 whole wheat tortillas (8 inches)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cumin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon chili powder
- 12 lime slices
- 1 cup cubed queso fresco or Monterey Jack cheese
- Crispy chow mein noodles



1. In a Dutch oven, cook beef and chorizo over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the cabbage, peppers and onion. Cook and stir until vegetables are crisp-tender. Add garlic; cook 2 minutes longer.
2. Stir in the V8 juice, salsa, beans, tomatoes, consomme, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cilantro, chili powder, cumin and sugar. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, with a 3-in. bat-shaped cookie cutter, cut out eight bats from each

tortilla. Lightly coat bats with cooking spray; sprinkle with salt, cumin and chili powder. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until crisp.

4. Ladle chili into individual bowls. Arrange a lime slice and bat on each; sprinkle with cheese, chow mein noodles and remaining cilantro. Serve with additional bats if desired.

NOTE Wear disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers; the oils can burn skin. Avoid touching your face.

Enchanting Main Dishes



Eyeball Subs

Add sliced pimiento-stuffed olives to the top of your meatballs and dinner will be looking at you.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 45 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 12 small submarine sandwich buns, split
- 1 large egg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds lean ground beef (90% lean)
- 2 tablespoons canola oil, divided
- 2 medium green peppers, julienned
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 bottle (12 ounces) chili sauce
- 1 cup water
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground mustard
- Sliced pimiento-stuffed olives

1. Hollow out bun bottoms, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. shell. Crumble $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups removed bread and place in a large bowl. Cover buns with plastic wrap; set aside.
2. Add the egg, milk, chopped onion, salt and pepper to the bread. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Shape into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -in. balls. In a large skillet, cook meatballs in 1 tablespoon oil for 20-25 minutes or until no longer pink. Remove with a slotted spoon; set aside.
3. Add the remaining oil to the skillet; saute the green peppers and sliced onion until tender. Remove with a slotted spoon; set aside.



4. Stir flour into skillet. Add chili sauce and water; bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 1-2 minutes. Stir in brown sugar and mustard. Add meatballs, peppers and onion; cover and simmer for 20 minutes.
5. Meanwhile, warm rolls in a 325° oven for 8-10 minutes. Spoon two meatballs and sauce into each roll; replace tops and garnish with olive slices for eyes.

Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti

Our family adores autumn and anything to do with pumpkins. We all love this recipe because it's warm and comforting. It's so quick to put together on a cool fall evening after a day of work or raking leaves.

—MANDY HOWISON RENFREW, PA

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 25 MIN.
MAKES: 7 SERVINGS

- 1 package (8 ounces) manicotti shells
- 1 container (15 ounces) ricotta cheese
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 large egg yolks
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 jar (24 ounces) garlic spaghetti sauce, divided

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Cook manicotti shells according to package directions for al dente. Drain.
2. In a large bowl, mix ricotta cheese, 1 cup mozzarella cheese, pumpkin, Parmesan cheese, egg yolks and nutmeg. Spoon into manicotti.
3. Spread 1 cup spaghetti sauce into a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. Top with stuffed manicotti. Pour remaining spaghetti sauce over top; sprinkle with remaining mozzarella cheese. Bake, covered, 25-30 minutes or until the cheese is melted.

Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells

Kids will have no trouble gobbling up these silly monster pasta shells.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 40 MIN.
MAKES: 7 SERVINGS

- 21 uncooked jumbo pasta shells**
- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage**
- 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms**
- ½ cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 3 cups spaghetti sauce, divided**
- 1 carton (15 ounces) part-skim ricotta cheese**
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1 large egg**
- 1½ teaspoons dried basil**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- 1 jar (12 ounces) roasted sweet red peppers, drained**
- Sliced olives**

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, cook the sausage, mushrooms, red pepper and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Stir in 1 cup spaghetti sauce. Remove from the heat and set aside.

2. Drain pasta and rinse in cold water. Spread the remaining spaghetti sauce into a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. In a small bowl, combine cheeses, egg, basil and garlic powder. Spoon heaping tablespoonfuls into shells. Arrange shells in dish. Spoon sausage mixture into shells.

3. Cover and bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until bubbly. Cut roasted peppers to resemble tongues. Add a tongue to each shell and olives for eyes.



Frankenstein Boo-ritos

The kids will get a charge out of these monster burritos. The mild-tasting filling will appeal to even the pickiest eater.

—CLARA COULSON MINNEY
WASHINGTON COURT HOUSE, OH

START TO FINISH: 25 MIN.
MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 1 envelope (5.6 ounces) Spanish rice and pasta mix**
- 2 cups cubed cooked chicken**
- 1 can (15 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained**
- 1 can (14 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained**
- 8 spinach tortillas (10 inches)**
- Toppings: sour cream, blue corn tortilla chips, cubed and shredded cheese, ripe olives and sweet red pepper**

- 1.** In a large saucepan, prepare rice mix according to package directions. Stir in chicken, corn and tomatoes; heat through.
- 2.** Spoon about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup rice mixture across center of each tortilla. Fold bottom and sides of tortilla over filling and roll up. Using toppings, create a face on each burrito.



Party Time Mini Cheeseburgers

Instead of being piled on, favorite toppings like pickle relish, mustard and ketchup are cooked right into the meat for these fun sliders.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.
MAKES: 5 SERVINGS

- 1 large egg, lightly beaten
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup quick-cooking oats
- 2 tablespoons dill pickle relish
- 2 tablespoons ketchup
- 2 teaspoons prepared mustard
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 pound ground beef
- 3 to 4 slices process American cheese
- 10 dinner rolls, split

1. Preheat broiler. In a large bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Add beef; mix lightly but thoroughly. Shape into 10 patties. Transfer to a 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Broil 3-4 in. from heat 4-6 minutes on each side or until a thermometer reads 160°.

2. Meanwhile, using a 1-in. pumpkin-shaped cookie cutter, cut out 10 pumpkin shapes from cheese slices or cut slices into thirds. Immediately place on burgers; serve on rolls.

FREEZE OPTION Place patties on a plastic wrap-lined baking sheet; wrap and freeze until firm. Remove from pan and transfer to a large resealable plastic bag; return to freezer. To use, broil frozen patties as directed, increasing time as necessary.



Spooky Pizza

Pizza is always a hit, but it's even better with a homemade touch. Use your imagination to give popular Hawaiian pizza a new boo-tiful look.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 25 MIN.

MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 1 loaf (1 pound) frozen bread dough, thawed**
- 1 cup pizza sauce**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- 4 slices Canadian bacon**
- 3 slices pineapple**
- 1 pitted ripe olive, cut in half lengthwise**

- 1.** Roll dough into a 15-in. circle. Transfer to an ungreased 14-in. pizza pan, building up edges slightly. Bake at 425° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned.
- 2.** Spread with sauce; sprinkle with cheese. Bake for 5 minutes. Cut each Canadian bacon slice into ¼-in. strips; arrange on pizza for hair. Bake for 5-6 minutes or until cheese is browned.
- 3.** For the eyes, arrange two slices pineapple and olive halves on pizza. Cut remaining pineapple slice in half. From one half, cut three thin pieces. Add the half slice and pieces of pineapple for mouth and teeth. (Save remaining pineapple for another use.)

Confetti Corn Quesadillas

Lure your little monsters to the table with this fun supper. My veggie-packed quesadillas are simple, cheesy and quite irresistible.

—CAREY HUNT PORTLAND, OR

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 10 MIN./BATCH
MAKES: 10 SERVINGS

- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained**
- 1 cup fresh or frozen corn, thawed**
- 1 cup shredded zucchini**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup minced fresh cilantro**
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon pepper**
- 1 teaspoon chili powder**
- 1 tablespoon canola oil**
- 10 flour or whole wheat tortillas (8 inches)**
- Sour cream, salsa and guacamole, optional**

1. In a large bowl, combine the first nine ingredients.

2. Lightly brush oil over one side of each tortilla. Place two tortillas, oil side down, on a griddle. Spread $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cheese mixture over half of each tortilla; fold over. Cook over low heat for 3-4 minutes on each side or until cheese is melted.

3. Cut into wedges. Repeat. If desired, cut a small hole in a corner of a food-safe plastic bag. Fill bag with sour cream. Pipe spider web pattern over quesadillas. Serve with salsa and guacamole if desired.

NOTE Wear disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers; the oils can burn skin. Avoid touching your face.



Haunted Potpie

Convenience items such as frozen hash browns, frozen veggies and puff pastry make this savory potpie so easy, it's almost creepy!

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 50 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 4 cups cubed cooked chicken
- 4 cups frozen cubed hash brown potatoes, thawed
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen mixed vegetables, thawed and drained
- 1 can (10% ounces) condensed cream of chicken soup, undiluted
- 1 can (10% ounces) condensed cream of onion soup, undiluted
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup milk
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon garlic powder
- 3 slices rye bread
- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry, thawed

1. In a large bowl, combine the first 11 ingredients. Transfer to a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. Place bread in a food processor; cover and process to make crumbs. Sprinkle over the chicken mixture. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until bubbly.
2. Meanwhile, on a lightly floured surface, unfold pastry sheet. Using a small floured ghost-shaped cookie cutter, cut out 12 ghosts. Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Remove potpie from the oven; set aside and keep warm. Bake ghosts at 400° for 10 minutes or until puffy and golden brown. Top each serving with a ghost; serve immediately.

Eyeball Taco Salad

The attention will be on your table when you set out this tasty main-dish salad. Topped with edible peepers, it's packed with beef, cheese, tomato and delicious taco flavor to satisfy a crowd.

—JOLENE YOUNG UNION, IL

PREP: 35 MIN. • **BAKE:** 25 MIN.
MAKES: 10 SERVINGS

- 2½ pounds lean ground beef (90% lean)
- ¾ cup water
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 envelope taco seasoning
- 1 package (12½ ounces) nacho tortilla chips, crushed
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 4 cups torn iceberg lettuce
- 1 medium red onion, finely chopped
- 10 slices tomato, halved
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- 10 whole pitted ripe olives, halved

1. In a Dutch oven, cook beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in water, tomato sauce and taco seasoning. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 15 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, preheat oven to 325°. Place tortilla chips in a greased 15x10x1-in. baking pan; sprinkle with Monterey Jack cheese. Spread meat mixture over top; sprinkle with cheddar cheese. Bake 25-30 minutes or until bubbly.

3. Top with lettuce and onion. Cut into ten 5x3-in. pieces. On each piece, arrange two tomato slices for eyes; top each with a dollop of sour cream and an olive half.



Spooky Side Dishes & Salads



Sausage & Rice Stuffed Pumpkins

My children often request this dish. It also adds a real “wow” factor to a festive buffet table.

—ANDRIA PECKHAM LOWELL, MI

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 55 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

3 small pie pumpkins (about 2 pounds each)

½ pound bulk sweet Italian sausage

1 pound fresh mushrooms, chopped

2 medium onions, chopped

1 medium green pepper, chopped

2 garlic cloves, minced

4 cups cooked long grain rice

1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided

2 large eggs, lightly beaten

¼ cup minced fresh parsley

1 teaspoon salt

½ teaspoon dried thyme

1. Preheat oven to 450°. Cut a 3-in. circle around each pumpkin stem. Remove tops and set aside. Remove strings and seeds from pumpkins; discard seeds or save for toasting.

2. In a large skillet, cook sausage, vegetables and garlic over medium heat 6-8 minutes or until the sausage is no longer pink, breaking up sausage into crumbles; drain. Remove from heat; stir in the rice, ¾ cup cheese, eggs, parsley, salt and thyme.

3. Place pumpkins in a 15x10x1-in. baking pan; fill with rice mixture. Replace pumpkin tops. Bake 30 minutes.

4. Reduce oven setting to 350°. Bake 25-35 minutes longer or until pumpkin is tender when pierced with a knife and a thermometer inserted into filling reads

160°. Sprinkle remaining cheese over filling.

5. To serve, remove rice. Scoop out pumpkin and serve with rice.



Gingered Orange Carrots

This attractive side dish goes well with poultry, pork or beef entrees. Guests almost always end up asking for the recipe!

—LAURIE HICKS TROY, MT

START TO FINISH: 25 MIN.

MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

- 8 medium carrots, cut into ¼-inch slices**
- 2 medium onions, halved and thinly sliced**
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- ¼ cup orange juice**
- ¼ cup red currant jelly**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley**

- 1.** In a large skillet, saute the carrots, onions and ginger in butter for 8-10 minutes or until crisp-tender.
- 2.** Add the orange juice, jelly and salt. Cook and stir for 2-3 minutes or until sauce is slightly thickened. Sprinkle with parsley. Serve with a slotted spoon.

Butternut Squash Casserole

When we lived in Zimbabwe, Mom couldn't get sweet potatoes. So instead she made this creamy casserole with butternut squash, spices and a touch of sugar. It soon became a family favorite.

—SUSAN HANSEN AUBURN, AL

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 30 MIN.
MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

- 2 medium butternut squash, peeled and cut into chunks**
- ½ cup sugar**
- 2 large eggs**
- ¾ cup milk**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg**

1. Place squash in a large saucepan and cover with water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 12-16 minutes or until tender. Drain.

2. In a small bowl, beat squash until smooth. Add the remaining ingredients; beat well. Spoon into a 1½-qt. baking dish coated with cooking spray. Cover and bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until a thermometer inserted near the center reads 160°.



Frankenstein Salads

Kids of all ages will love these fruity Frankenstein faces made from rectangles of jiggly green gelatin resting on bright purple kale. Bean sprout hair, jelly bean eyes and nose, mini marshmallow bolts and a sour cream smile give this memorable monster some playful personality.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 20 MIN. + CHILLING

MAKES: 6 SERVINGS

- 2 packages (6 ounces each) lime gelatin**
- 2½ cups boiling water**
- ¾ cup bean sprouts**
- 12 orange jelly beans**
- 6 red jelly beans**
- 3 tablespoons sour cream**
- 12 miniature marshmallows**
- Purple kale, optional**

In a bowl, dissolve gelatin in water. Pour into an 8-in. square pan that has been coated with cooking spray. Refrigerate for 4 hours or until firm. Cut into six rectangles; place each on a plate. Decorate with bean sprouts for hair, orange jelly beans for eyes and a red jelly bean for nose. Fill a small plastic bag with sour cream; cut a small hole in the corner of the bag. Pipe a jagged smile on face. Place marshmallows on side of head for bolts. Garnish plates with kale if desired.

Potato Pumpkin Mash

I swirl fresh pumpkin into potatoes for a little extra seasonal color. No more plain white potatoes for us! If you'd like, you can substitute butternut squash for the pumpkin.

—MICHELLE MEDLEY DALLAS, TX

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 25 MIN.
MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 8 cups cubed peeled pie pumpkin (about 2 pounds)**
- 8 medium Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cubed (about 2 pounds)**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup 2% milk, divided**
- 8 tablespoons butter, softened, divided**
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon coarsely ground pepper**

1. Place pumpkin in a large saucepan; add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes or until tender.

2. Meanwhile, place potatoes in another saucepan; add water to cover. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook, uncovered, for 10-15 minutes or until tender.

3. Drain potatoes; return to pan. Mash the potatoes, adding $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk, 4 tablespoons butter and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt. Add additional milk if needed to reach desired consistency. Transfer to a serving bowl; keep warm.

4. Drain pumpkin; return to pan. Mash pumpkin, gradually adding the remaining butter and salt and enough remaining milk to reach desired consistency; spoon

evenly over potatoes. Cut through mashed vegetables with a spoon or knife to swirl. Drizzle with olive oil; sprinkle with pepper. Serve immediately.



Wiggly Worm Stir-Fry

I love to cook with fresh vegetables, especially when they're from my garden. The ramen noodles look like worms, making it a fun dish for all.

—WENDY MYERS THOMPSON FALLS, MT

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.**MAKES:** 4 SERVINGS

- 1 small sweet red pepper, julienned**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup cut fresh green beans**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup thinly sliced fresh carrots**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped red onion**
- 1 tablespoon canola oil**
- 1 package (3 ounces) ramen noodles**
- 1 yellow summer squash, sliced**
- 1 medium zucchini, sliced**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chicken broth**
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce**
- 1 teaspoon fajita seasoning mix**

1. In a large skillet or wok, stir-fry the pepper, green beans, carrots and onion in oil for 4 minutes. Meanwhile, cook noodles according to package directions (discard seasoning packet or save for another use).

2. Add the remaining ingredients to the vegetable mixture; cook and stir until vegetables are crisp-tender. Drain noodles; add to vegetables and stir until blended.

Fiery Potato Chips

Seasoned with chili powder and cayenne pepper, these paper-thin chips will be a hit at your next gathering.

—SUE MURPHY GREENWOOD, MI

PREP: 15 MIN. + SOAKING

COOK: 5 MIN./BATCH

MAKES: 10 CUPS

- 4 medium unpeeled potatoes**
- 4 teaspoons salt, divided**
- 4 cups ice water**
- 1 tablespoon chili powder**
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt**
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes**
- ¼ to ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- Oil for deep-fat frying**

1. Using a vegetable peeler or metal cheese slicer, cut potatoes into very thin lengthwise strips. Place in a large bowl; add 3 teaspoons salt and ice water. Soak for 30 minutes; drain.

2. Place potatoes on paper towels and pat dry. In a small bowl, combine the chili powder, garlic salt, parsley, cayenne and remaining salt; set aside.

3. In an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat oil to 375°. Cook potatoes in oil in batches for 2-3 minutes or until deep golden brown, stirring frequently.

4. Remove with a slotted spoon; drain on paper towels. Immediately sprinkle with reserved seasoning mixture. Store in an airtight container.



Pumpkin Seed Spinach Salad

Use the seeds from your jack-o'-lantern to make the wonderfully crunchy topping for a fall salad. The greens are studded with cranberries for extra color.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.**MAKES:** 10 SERVINGS

- ½ cup unsalted pumpkin seeds**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- ⅛ teaspoon salt**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cumin**
- ⅛ teaspoon ground ginger**
- Pinch cayenne pepper**

DRESSING

- ¼ cup vegetable oil**
- 2 tablespoons rice vinegar**
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup**
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise**
- 1 teaspoon sugar**

SALAD

- 1 package (6 ounces) fresh baby spinach**
- ½ cup dried cranberries**
- ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese**

1. In a large skillet, toast seeds over medium heat for 2 minutes, stirring often. Add the sugar and seasonings. Continue to cook and stir until sugar melts, about 4 minutes. Spread mixture on waxed paper to cool.

2. In a small bowl, whisk dressing ingredients until smooth. In a large salad bowl, combine the spinach, cranberries, cheese and pumpkin seeds. Serve with dressing.

Jack-o'-Lantern Oranges

Sure, Halloween is all about candy, but this recipe is a great way to get in some fruit! Your little helpers can even cut up the apples and grapes with plastic knives and decide how they want their fancy orange to look.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 1 HOUR
MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 8 small navel oranges**
- 1 small apple, chopped**
- ½ cup halved seedless red grapes**
- Slivered almonds and whole cloves**

- 1.** Choose which side of each orange will be the jack-o'-lantern's face; cut a thin slice from the bottom of each so that it rests flat. Cut another small slice from the top. Spoon out pulp. Chop pulp and combine with apple and grapes; set aside.
- 2.** Cut faces as desired; decorate with cloves and almonds. Spoon fruit mixture into jack-o'-lanterns.



Boo-tiful Bars, Cookies & Candies



Bones & Blood

Like a zombie, you'll be desperate for more of these bone-shaped cookies and dip. Fight nicely over them—no biting!

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 45 MIN.

BAKE: 25 MIN./BATCH + COOLING

MAKES: 40 COOKIES (2 CUPS SAUCE)

- 5 large egg whites
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cake flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ground almonds
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar
- Dash salt
- 4 drops yellow food coloring, optional
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar

SAUCE

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups heavy whipping cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup semisweet chocolate chips
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup strawberry jelly
- Red food coloring, optional

1. Place egg whites in a large bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, combine the flour, almonds, cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg.
2. Add the vanilla, cream of tartar, salt and, if desired, food coloring to the egg whites. Beat on medium speed until soft peaks form. Gradually add the sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating on high until stiff glossy peaks form and sugar is dissolved. Fold in flour mixture.
3. Cut a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. hole in the corner of a pastry or plastic bag. Fill bag with egg white mixture. Pipe 4-in. logs onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Pipe two $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. balls at both ends of each log. Bake

at 300° for 25-30 minutes or until firm to the touch. Remove to wire racks. Store in an airtight container.

4. In a small microwave-safe bowl, combine cream, chocolate chips and jelly.

Microwave on high in 30-second intervals until melted; stir until smooth. Tint red if desired. Cool to room temperature and serve with bones. Refrigerate leftover sauce.



Chocolate Crawlies

Turn your kitchen into a “web site” by preparing a batch of these creepy candy spiders.

—**SANDI PICHON** MEMPHIS, TN

PREP: 20 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 2 DOZEN

- 8 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped**
- 2 cups miniature marshmallows**
- Black or red shoestring licorice**
- 24 small round candy-coated milk chocolate balls (such as Hershey’s or Sixlets)**

1. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat the chocolate for 1½ minutes at 50% power, stirring after 30 seconds. Stir until melted; let stand for 5 minutes. Stir in the marshmallows. Drop by tablespoonfuls onto a waxed paper-lined baking sheet. Cut licorice into 2-in. pieces; press six or eight pieces into each mound for legs. Press two chocolate balls into each mound for eyes.

2. Refrigerate until firm, about 20 minutes.

NOTE *This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.*

Frosted Pistachio Bars

Bar cookies are the best because they're so fast and easy. Make these as spooky as you dare!

—SHANNON SHEEHY CHESTERFIELD, VA

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 2 DOZEN

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 packages (3.4 ounces each) instant pistachio pudding mix
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, melted
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped pistachios, optional

FROSTING

- 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, softened
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups confectioners' sugar

Optional decorations: candy eyeballs, M&M's minis, milk chocolate M&M's, Life Savers hard candies and gummies, regular and mini peanut butter cups, licorice twists, shoestring licorice, Starburst fruit chews, mega and regular Smarties, Nerds, Runts, Snaps chewy candies, candy corn, tiny-size Chiclets gum, butterscotch hard candies, Rolo candies, Caramel Creams and PayDay candy bar

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, whisk flour, pudding mix, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, whisk

egg, melted butter, oil, water and vanilla until blended; stir into flour mixture. If desired, stir in the pistachios. (Dough will be stiff.)

2. Press dough into a greased 13x9-in. baking pan. Bake 20-25 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Cool completely in pan on a wire rack.

3. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese, butter, vanilla and salt until blended. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar. Spread over top. Decorate as desired.

4. Cut into bars before serving. Store in the refrigerator.



Gingerbread Skeletons

Any small gingerbread-boy cookie cutter takes on new life with these clever cookies. Give the skeletons some cat friends, too.

The more the merrier!

—DORE' MERRICK GRABSKI UTICA, NY

PREP: 15 MIN. + CHILLING

BAKE: 10 MIN./BATCH

MAKES: ABOUT 2 DOZEN

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup shortening
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup molasses
- 1 large egg
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon each ground cinnamon, ginger and cloves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- Confectioners' sugar icing

1. In a bowl, cream shortening and sugar. Add molasses and egg; mix well. Combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, cloves, salt and nutmeg; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Divide dough in half. Refrigerate at least 2 hours.
2. Preheat oven to 350°. On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion of dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-in. cookie cutter. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets.
3. Bake 9 minutes or until edges are firm. Remove to wire racks to cool. Decorate as desired.

Melted Witch Puddles

In honor of the doomed wicked witch in *The Wizard of Oz*, get creative in fashioning these simply delicious snacks.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 1 HOUR + CHILLING
MAKES: 3 DOZEN

- 1 teaspoon water
- 4 drops yellow food coloring
- 1½ cups flaked coconut
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
- 6 tablespoons shortening, divided
- 36 chocolate cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies
- 36 Bugles
- 4 cups vanilla or white chips
- 36 pretzel sticks

1. In a large resealable plastic bag, combine water and food coloring; add coconut. Seal bag and shake to tint coconut; set aside. In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and 2 tablespoons shortening; stir until smooth.
2. For witches' hats, place about ⅓ cup chocolate mixture in a resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in a corner of bag. Pipe a small amount of chocolate on a cookie. Dip a Bugle into some of the remaining chocolate; allow excess to drip off. Position over chocolate on cookie, forming a witch's hat. Set on waxed paper to dry. Repeat with remaining chocolate, Bugles and cookies.
3. For puddles, melt vanilla chips and the remaining shortening; stir until smooth. Place mixture in a large heavy-duty resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in a corner of bag. Pipe mixture into the shape of a puddle onto waxed paper-lined baking sheets.



4. Immediately place a witch's hat on the puddle. Place a pretzel stick alongside the hat; sprinkle reserved tinted coconut at the end of the pretzel stick. Repeat with

remaining puddles, hats and brooms. Chill for 15 minutes or until set. Store in an airtight container.

Caramel Corn Treats

A funky-fun twist on traditional Rice Krispie squares, these are a cinch to make and will delight the little ones.

—CATHY TANG REDMOND, WA

START TO FINISH: 15 MIN.
MAKES: 2 DOZEN

- 5 cups caramel corn**
- 2 cups miniature pretzels**
- 1 cup miniature cheddar cheese fish-shaped crackers**
- 1½ cups Reese's pieces, divided**
- 1 package (10½ ounces) miniature marshmallows**
- ¼ cup butter, cubed**
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract**

- 1.** In a large bowl, combine the caramel corn, pretzels, crackers and 1 cup Reese's pieces. In a large microwave-safe bowl, melt marshmallows and butter; add vanilla and stir until smooth. Pour over pretzel mixture; stir until well coated.
- 2.** Press into a greased 13x9-in. pan. Sprinkle with the remaining Reese's pieces; press lightly. Let stand until set. Cut into bars.



Halloween Peanut Butter Cookie Pops

A miniature candy bar is hidden inside these creative pops. Colored frosting and candy faces make these addictive little snacks the perfect Halloween treat.

—MARTHA HOOVER COATESVILLE, PA

PREP: 20 MIN.

BAKE: 15 MIN./BATCH + COOLING

MAKES: 1 DOZEN

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup creamy peanut butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup packed brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- 1 large egg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 12 lollipop sticks
- 12 fun-size Snickers or Milky Way candy bars
- Prepared vanilla frosting
- Food coloring
- Black decorating gel
- Optional decorations: Reese's mini peanut butter cups, M&M's minis, mini Chiclets gum and candy eyeballs

1. Preheat oven to 375°. In a small bowl, cream butter, peanut butter and sugars until blended. Beat in egg and vanilla. In a small bowl, whisk flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; gradually beat into creamed mixture.

2. Insert a lollipop stick into the small end of each candy bar. Divide the dough into 12 pieces; wrap one piece around each candy bar. Place 4 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.

3. Bake 14-16 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on pans 10 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely. Tint frosting; frost cookies. Decorate with gel and optional decorations as desired.



Soft Rum Caramels

I adapted a family recipe years ago to come up with these melt-in-your-mouth caramels that make great party favors or holiday gifts. Rum extract gives the candies that extra special punch. My husband and daughter eagerly volunteer to eat any scraps from the pan!

—KELLY-ANN GIBBONS PRINCE GEORGE, BC

PREP: 10 MIN. • **COOK:** 30 MIN.
MAKES: 1½ POUNDS

- 1** teaspoon plus ¼ cup butter, softened, divided
- 1** cup heavy whipping cream
- 1** cup packed brown sugar
- 1** cup light corn syrup
- ¼** cup sugar
- ¼** teaspoon salt
- 1** to 2 teaspoons rum extract

- 1.** Line an 8-in. square pan with foil and grease the foil with 1 teaspoon butter; set aside. In a small bowl, cream remaining butter until light and fluffy. Beat in cream until smooth; set aside.
- 2.** In a heavy saucepan, combine the brown sugar, corn syrup, sugar and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook until a candy thermometer reads 244° (firm-ball stage). Gradually add cream mixture. Continue cooking until a candy thermometer reads 242°. Remove from the heat; stir in extract.
- 3.** Pour into prepared pan (do not scrape sides of saucepan). Cool completely. Invert pan onto cutting board; remove foil. Cut candy into squares. Wrap individually in cellophane, waxed paper or foil; twist ends. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Cutout Pumpkin Sandwich Cookies

Apricot preserves peek out of these buttery, tender sugar cookies. Make them throughout the year with a variety of cookie cutter shapes.

—SCHELBY THOMPSON
CAMDEN WYOMING, DE

PREP: 40 MIN. + CHILLING
BAKE: 10 MIN./BATCH + COOLING
MAKES: 2 DOZEN

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1½ cups sugar, divided**
- 2 large eggs, separated**
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- Confectioners' sugar**
- ½ cup ground almonds**
- ¾ cup apricot preserves**

1. In a large bowl, cream butter and ¾ cup sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine the flour and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Shape dough into a ball; chill for 1 hour or until firm.

2. On a surface dusted with confectioners' sugar, roll dough to ⅛-in. thickness; cut with a 3-in. pumpkin-shaped cookie cutter. Cut a 1½-in. pumpkin from the center of half the cookies and remove (set aside small pumpkin cutouts to bake separately).

3. Place on greased baking sheets. Beat egg whites until frothy. Combine almonds and remaining sugar. Brush each cookie with egg whites; sprinkle with almond mixture. Bake at 350° for 6-8 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove

immediately to wire racks to cool completely.

4. Spread 1½ teaspoons of apricot preserves on the bottoms of the solid cookies; place cookies with cutout centers, almond side up, over filling.



Haunting Desserts



Gourmet Caramel Apples

Peanut butter and pretzels add a salty twist to these sweet harvest apples. They'll be the treats you can't wait to make each year.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 20 MIN. + STANDING
MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

- 4 large tart apples
- 4 wooden pop sticks
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips
- 1 cup semisweet chocolate chips
- 4½ ounces white candy coating, coarsely chopped
- 1 teaspoon shortening
- 1 package (11 ounces) Kraft caramel bits
- 2 tablespoons water
- 4 pretzel rods, coarsely crushed
- ½ cup Reese's pieces

1. Line a baking sheet with waxed paper and grease the paper; set aside. Wash and thoroughly dry apples. Insert a wooden pop stick into the top of each; set aside.

2. Place chocolate chips in separate microwave-safe bowls. Heat in a microwave until melted; stir until smooth. In another microwave-safe bowl, melt candy coating and shortening; stir until smooth.

3. Combine caramels and water in another microwave-safe bowl. Heat in a microwave until melted; stir until smooth. Dip apples into caramel; turn to coat. Immediately press pretzels and Reese's pieces into sides of apples. Drizzle melted chocolate and candy coating over tops. Place on prepared pan; let stand until set.



Jack-o'-Lantern Pie

Pumpkin pie does not have to be difficult to make. This recipe has wonderful maple flavor and is sure to be a hit at your fall get-togethers.

—MARTY RUMMEL TROUT LAKE, WA

PREP: 10 MIN. • **BAKE:** 1 HOUR + COOLING
MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten**
- 1 cup canned pumpkin**
- 1 cup evaporated milk**
- ½ cup sugar**
- ¼ cup maple syrup**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ½ teaspoon maple flavoring**
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract**
- Pastry for double-crust pie (9 inches)**
- Whipped cream**

- 1.** In a large bowl, beat first 10 ingredients until smooth. Divide pastry in half so that one portion is slightly larger than the other. Roll out larger portion to fit a 9-in. pie plate. Transfer pastry to pie plate. Trim pastry to ½ in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges. Pour filling into crust.
- 2.** Cover edges loosely with foil. Bake at 400° for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350°; bake 40–45 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Remove foil. Cool on a wire rack.
- 3.** Roll remaining pastry to ⅛-in. thickness; cut into desired shapes. Place cutouts on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 400° for 6–8 minutes or until golden brown. Arrange cutouts over pie. Garnish servings with whipped cream.

Owl Tree

I have been “cooking” since I was 3 years old. Now I cook for my two teenage sons and bake decorated cakes for family and friends. I came up with this for an online contest. It was a hoot!

—TAMMY BAKER BOWLING GREEN, KY

PREP: 1 HOUR • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 21 CUPCAKES AND 6 MINI CUPCAKES

- 1 package chocolate fudge cake mix (regular size)
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup canola oil
- ¼ cup brewed coffee, room temperature
- 3 large eggs
- 1 cup (6 ounces) miniature semisweet chocolate chips

FROSTING AND DECORATIONS

- 1 can (16 ounces) chocolate frosting, divided
- 1 teaspoon black paste food coloring
- 12 mini Oreo cookies
- Brown and yellow milk chocolate M&M's
- ¾ cups confectioners' sugar
- ½ cup butter, softened
- ½ cup shortening
- ¼ to ½ cup water

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Line 21 muffin cups and 6 mini muffin cups with paper liners.
2. In a large bowl, combine cake mix, water, oil, coffee and eggs; beat on low speed 30 seconds. Beat on medium 2 minutes. Stir in chocolate chips. Fill prepared cups two-thirds full. Bake 18-22 minutes for regular-sized cupcakes and 10-12 minutes for mini cupcakes or until a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool in pans 10 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.
3. Place 1½ cups chocolate frosting in a small bowl. Tint black with food coloring.

Cut a small hole in the tip of a pastry bag or in a corner of a food-safe plastic bag; insert #125 or other large petal or flat pastry tip. Fill bag with black frosting and set aside.

4. Frost mini cupcakes with some of the remaining chocolate frosting. Separate Oreo cookies, leaving cream filling on one side of the cookies. Place filling sides of cookies on frosted cupcakes for eyes, cream side up; attach brown M&M's with chocolate frosting.

5. Trim the plain cookies into triangles for ears; place above eyes. Insert #16 or

other star pastry tip into another pastry bag. Fill bag with remaining chocolate frosting. Pipe feathers on ears and around eyes. Place yellow M&M's between eyes for beaks.

6. In a large bowl, beat confectioners' sugar, butter, shortening and enough water to reach spreading consistency; frost large cupcakes. Arrange cupcakes side by side on a covered cake board.

7. Pipe black frosting across tops of cupcakes for tree trunk and branches. Place owl cupcakes on branches.



Easy Cherry Pockets

This sweet treat takes just 10 minutes to prepare, meaning you'll have more time to celebrate the occasion with your family.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.
MAKES: 4 SERVINGS

- 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**
- 1 cup cherry pie filling**
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons 2% milk**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375°. Unroll crescent roll dough and separate into four squares; place on an ungreased baking sheet. Press seams and perforations together. Spoon ¼ cup pie filling in one corner of each square. Fold to make triangles; pinch to seal.
- 2.** Bake 10-12 minutes or until golden. Combine sugar and milk to achieve drizzling consistency. Drizzle over turnovers; serve warm.



Graveyard Cake

A chocolate cake lies beneath this haunted graveyard. You can make the cake from scratch in a few simple steps, and setting the ghostly scene is a cinch. The recipe is an old favorite, but we never tire of it.

—VICKI SCHLECHTER DAVIS, CA

PREP: 30 MIN. + CHILLING

BAKE: 35 MIN. + COOLING

MAKES: 16 SERVINGS

2 cups all-purpose flour

2 cups sugar

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

1 cup butter

1 cup water

¾ cup baking cocoa

¾ cup sour cream

2 large eggs

FROSTING

¼ cup butter

3 tablespoons milk

2 tablespoons baking cocoa

2 cups confectioners' sugar

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

18 Oreo cookies

Black decorator's icing or gel

9 cream-filled oval vanilla sandwich cookies

1 cup whipped topping

Pumpkin candies and gummy worms, optional

1. In a bowl, combine flour, sugar, baking soda and salt; set aside. In a saucepan, combine butter, water and cocoa; bring to a boil over medium heat. Add to flour mixture; beat well. Beat in the sour cream and eggs.

2. Pour into a greased 13x9-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 35-38 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack for 5 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, combine butter, milk and cocoa; bring to a boil. Remove from the heat; stir in sugar and vanilla. Pour over warm cake. Crumble the chocolate cookies; sprinkle over frosting while still warm. Cool cake completely.

4. For tombstone, use icing to decorate vanilla cookies with words or faces; place on cake. For ghosts, make mounds of whipped topping; use icing to add eyes and mouths as desired. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Just before serving, add pumpkins and gummy worms if desired.



Halloween Pretzel Treats

What's not to love with these sweet and salty snack sticks? As an added bonus, these treats can easily be customized for any holiday.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 35 MIN. + STANDING
MAKES: ABOUT 2 DOZEN

- 8 ounces white baking chocolate, chopped**
- 1 package (10 ounces) pretzel rods**
- 1 cup orange candy coating disks**
Yellow, orange and brown jimmies

- 1.** In a microwave, melt baking chocolate; stir until smooth. Dip each pretzel halfway into chocolate, allowing excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper; let stand until set.
- 2.** In a microwave, melt candy coating disks; stir until smooth. Dip pretzel tips into coating, allowing excess to drip off; sprinkle with jimmies. Let stand until set. Store in an airtight container.

Cream Puff Ghosts

Don't get spooked by these ghostly Halloween characters—my creamy puffs aren't hard to make at all.

—DIXIE TERRY GOREVILLE, IL

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 30 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 9 CREAM PUFFS

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup water
- 6 tablespoons butter
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 4 large eggs

PUMPKIN FILLING

- 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cold orange juice
- 1 cup milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped
- Confectioners' sugar
- Miniature black jelly beans or chocolate chips

1. In a saucepan, bring the water, butter, sugar and salt to a boil. Add flour all at once and stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from the heat; let stand for 5 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition.

2. Continue beating until mixture is smooth and shiny. Drop by $\frac{1}{3}$ cupfuls 3 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets; spread into 4x3-in. ovals. Using a knife coated with cooking spray, make a wavy edge at the bottom of the ghost. Bake at 400° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.

3. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over orange juice; let stand for 1 minute. Stir in the milk and brown sugar; cook and stir over low heat until gelatin and sugar are dissolved. Stir in pumpkin and pumpkin pie spice. Cover and refrigerate for 45-60 minutes or until thickened. Fold in whipped cream.

4. Split cream puffs in half; remove dough from inside. Set aside 1 to 2 tablespoons of filling for eyes. Spoon remaining filling into cream puffs; replace tops. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Place two small dots of reserved filling on each ghost; top with jelly beans. Serve immediately.



Strawberry Ghosts

These ghosts are so easy to make and always get such a gleeful reaction. Package them up in small gift boxes to give to the neighborhood kids when they come trick-or-treating.

—NANCY MUELLER HIGHLANDS RANCH, CO

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.

MAKES: 2½ DOZEN

- 30 fresh strawberries**
- 8 ounces white baking chocolate, chopped**
- 1 teaspoon shortening**
- ⅓ teaspoon almond extract**
- ¼ cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips**

- 1.** Wash strawberries and gently pat with paper towels until completely dry. In a microwave-safe bowl, melt white chocolate and shortening at 50% power; stir until smooth. Stir in extract.
- 2.** Dip the strawberries in chocolate mixture; place on a waxed paper-lined baking sheet, allowing excess chocolate to form the ghosts' tails. Immediately press chocolate chips into coating for eyes. Freeze 5 minutes.
- 3.** In the microwave, melt remaining chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Dip a toothpick into melted chocolate and draw a mouth on each ghost. Refrigerate leftovers.



Chocolate Pumpkin Spider Tart

Guests will get caught up in this creamy pumpkin and chocolate swirled tart. The fancy web pattern is a snap to create and sure to impress.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 30 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 14 SERVINGS

- 2 cups chocolate graham cracker crumbs (about 10 whole crackers)**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, melted**

FILLING

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups canned pumpkin**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar**
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened**
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups heavy whipping cream**
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground ginger**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 3 large eggs, lightly beaten**
- $4\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking cocoa**
- Chopped glazed walnuts, optional**

1. In a large bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, sugar and butter. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of an ungreased 11-in. fluted tart pan with removable bottom. Place pan on a baking sheet. Bake at 375° for 8 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

2. In a large bowl, beat pumpkin, sugar and cream cheese until blended. Beat in the cream, orange peel, ginger, cinnamon, salt and nutmeg. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Transfer $\frac{3}{4}$ cup filling to a small bowl; whisk in cocoa.

3. Pour pumpkin filling into crust. Transfer chocolate mixture to a heavy-duty resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in a corner of bag. Pipe 4 concentric circles 1 in. apart over filling. Beginning with the center circle, gently pull a knife

through circles toward outer edge. Wipe knife clean. Repeat to complete spiderweb pattern.

4. Bake at 375° for 28-33 minutes or until set. Cool for 1 hour. Refrigerate overnight. Garnish with glazed walnuts if desired.



Taste of Home

Holiday

Happy Halloween!

general index

Look here for an index that lists recipes by type and main ingredient.

APPETIZERS & SNACKS

Bone Slices
Dirt Balls
Hot Dog Mummies with Honey Mustard Dip
Nutty Stuffed Toadstools
Popcorn Owls
Shriveled Brains

APPLES

Caramel Apple Doughnut Muffins
Gourmet Caramel Apples

BARs

Caramel Corn Treats
Frosted Pistachio Bars

BEANS

Bats, Twigs and Things Chili
Bewitched Chili

BEEF & GROUND BEEF

Bats, Twigs and Things Chili
Eyeball Subs
Eyeball Taco Salad
Party Time Mini Cheeseburgers

BEVERAGES

Pumpkin Pie Shots
Swamp Juice a la Slime
Witches' Brew

BREADS

Caramel Apple Doughnut Muffins
Spider Bread
Sweet Potato Biscuits
Witch's Broomstick Bread

BURGERS

Party Time Mini Cheeseburgers

CAKES & CUPCAKES

Graveyard Cake
Owl Tree

CANDIES

Chocolate Crawlies
Soft Rum Caramels

CARAMEL

Caramel Apple Doughnut Muffins
Caramel Corn Treats
Gourmet Caramel Apples

CARROTS

Gingered Orange Carrots

CHEESE & CREAM CHEESE

Bone Slices
Confetti Corn Quesadillas
Dirt Balls
Eyeball Taco Salad
Party Time Mini Cheeseburgers
Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti
Spooky Pizza

CHERRIES

Easy Cherry Pockets

CHICKEN

Frankenstein Boo-ritos
Haunted Potpie
Shriveled Brains

CHOCOLATE

Bones & Blood
Chocolate Crawlies
Chocolate Pumpkin Spider Tart
Gourmet Caramel Apples
Graveyard Cake
Halloween Peanut Butter Cookie Pops
Melted Witch Puddles
Owl Tree

COOKIES

Bones & Blood
Cutout Pumpkin Sandwich Cookies
Gingerbread Skeletons
Halloween Peanut Butter Cookie Pops
Melted Witch Puddles

CORN

Confetti Corn Quesadillas

DESSERTS (also see Bars; Cakes & Cupcakes; Candies; Cookies; Pies & Tarts)

Cream Puff Ghosts
Easy Cherry Pockets
Gourmet Caramel Apples
Halloween Pretzel Treats
Strawberry Ghosts

FRUIT (also see specific kinds)

Cutout Pumpkin Sandwich Cookies
Jack-o'-Lantern Oranges
Swamp Juice a la Slime
Witches' Brew

GINGER

Gingerbread Skeletons
Gingered Orange Carrots

LETTUCE

Eyeball Taco Salad

LIME

Frankenstein Salads

MAIN DISHES

Confetti Corn Quesadillas
Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells
Eyeball Taco Salad
Frankenstein Boo-ritos
Haunted Potpie
Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti
Spooky Pizza

MAPLE

Jack-o'-Lantern Pie

MARSHMALLOWS

Caramel Corn Treats
Chocolate Crawlies

MEATLESS

Confetti Corn Quesadillas
Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti

MUSHROOMS

Nutty Stuffed Toadstools
Shriveled Brains

NUTS & PEANUT BUTTER

Bones & Blood
Frosted Pistachio Bars
Halloween Peanut Butter Cookie Pops

ORANGES

Gingered Orange Carrots
Jack-o'-Lantern Oranges

PASTA

Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells
Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti
Wiggly Worm Stir-Fry

PEPPERS

Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells

PIES & TARTS

Chocolate Pumpkin Spider Tart
Jack-o'-Lantern Pie

POPCORN

Caramel Corn Treats
Popcorn Owls

POTATOES

Fiery Potato Chips
Haunted Potpie
Potato Pumpkin Mash

PRETZELS

Caramel Corn Treats
Halloween Pretzel Treats

PUMPKIN

Chocolate Pumpkin Spider Tart
Cream Puff Ghosts
Jack-o'-Lantern Pie
Potato Pumpkin Mash
Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti
Pumpkin Pie Shots
Pumpkin Seed Spinach Salad
Sausage & Rice Stuffed Pumpkins

RICE

Sausage & Rice Stuffed Pumpkins

SALADS

Eyeball Taco Salad
Frankenstein Salads
Jack-o'-Lantern Oranges
Pumpkin Seed Spinach Salad

SANDWICHES (also see Burgers)

Eyeball Subs

SAUSAGE & HOT DOGS

Bats, Twigs and Things Chili
Bewitched Chili
Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells
Hot Dog Mummies with Honey Mustard Dip
Sausage & Rice Stuffed Pumpkins

SEAFOOD

Bone Slices

SIDE DISHES

Butternut Squash Casserole
Fiery Potato Chips
Gingered Orange Carrots
Potato Pumpkin Mash
Sausage & Rice Stuffed Pumpkins
Wiggly Worm Stir-Fry

SOUPS & CHILI

Bat Wing Soup
Bats, Twigs and Things Chili
Bewitched Chili
Halloween Acorn Squash Soup

SPINACH

Pumpkin Seed Spinach Salad

SQUASH

Butternut Squash Casserole
Halloween Acorn Squash Soup
Pretty Autumn Soup

STRAWBERRIES

Bones & Blood
Strawberry Ghosts

SWEET POTATOES

Sweet Potato Biscuits

TOMATOES

Bat Wing Soup
Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells
Spooky Pizza

TORTILLAS

Bone Slices
Confetti Corn Quesadillas
Frankenstein Boo-ritos

VEGETABLES (also see specific kinds)

Haunted Potpie
Pretty Autumn Soup
Wiggly Worm Stir-Fry

WHITE CHOCOLATE

Halloween Pretzel Treats
Melted Witch Puddles
Strawberry Ghosts

alphabetical index

Look here for a complete list of the recipes offered in this eBook.

B

Bat Wing Soup
Bats, Twigs and Things Chili
Bewitched Chili
Bone Slices
Bones & Blood
Butternut Squash Casserole

C

Caramel Apple Doughnut Muffins
Caramel Corn Treats
Chocolate Crawlies
Chocolate Pumpkin Spider Tart
Confetti Corn Quesadillas
Cream Puff Ghosts
Cutout Pumpkin Sandwich Cookies

D

Dirt Balls

E

Easy Cherry Pockets
Eat 'em Up Pasta Shells
Eyeball Subs
Eyeball Taco Salad

F

Fiery Potato Chips
Frankenstein Boo-ritos
Frankenstein Salads
Frosted Pistachio Bars

G

Gingerbread Skeletons
Gingered Orange Carrots
Gourmet Caramel Apples
Graveyard Cake

H

Halloween Acorn Squash Soup
Halloween Peanut Butter Cookie Pops
Halloween Pretzel Treats
Haunted Potpie
Hot Dog Mummies with Honey Mustard Dip

J

Jack-o'-Lantern Oranges
Jack-o'-Lantern Pie

M

Melted Witch Puddles

N

Nutty Stuffed Toadstools

O

Owl Tree

P

Party Time Mini Cheeseburgers
Popcorn Owls
Potato Pumpkin Mash
Pretty Autumn Soup
Pumpkin & Cheese Manicotti
Pumpkin Pie Shots
Pumpkin Seed Spinach Salad

S

Sausage & Rice Stuffed Pumpkins
Shriveled Brains
Soft Rum Caramels
Spider Bread
Spooky Pizza
Strawberry Ghosts
Swamp Juice a la Slime
Sweet Potato Biscuits

W

Wiggly Worm Stir-Fry
Witches' Brew
Witch's Broomstick Bread